

Short introduction to the photographic collections with harmonized metadata manipulated in the ALEGORIA project

In this document, we briefly present some of the photographic collections that were handled in the ALEGORIA project. For each collection, the volumes indicated here correspond to the digitized photographs for which the metadata have been harmonized according to the RDF graph data model and ontology RiC-O (Records in Contexts), and are published as Linked Open Data. The considered collections are hosted by French institutions; they are:

- Oblique aerial photographs (from IGN – Photothèque nationale)
- LAPIE (from Archives nationales)
- Cartothèque de la reconstruction et de l’urbanisme (from Archives nationales)
- Combier (from Musée Nicéphore Niépce)

Oblique aerial photographs (IGN - Photothèque nationale)

IGN is the French mapping agency, whose photo library stores archives of vertical and oblique aerial photographs of the French territory since the 1920s. This service has more than 37,000 oblique aerial photographs, mainly from acquisitions made by the Compagnie Aérienne Française between 1919 and 1964, illustrating industrial areas (factories, quarries, etc.) and provincial towns, but also from regulatory deposits of missions financed with public funds by the IFN, EDF, the Cadastre, and the Ministry of Reconstruction until the end of the 1980s.

The metadata associated with 37865 already digitized photographs, were processed for ALEGORIA.



Dunkerque, 1948, IGN (France) - Photothèque Nationale – Durandea collection

LAPIE (Archives nationales)

The aerial photographs of the French company LAPIE, are oblique views acquired at medium and low altitude, which were produced in a commercial context. From the 1950s until the beginning of the following decade, LAPIE's airplanes crisscrossed the French territory, taking thousands of pictures for the production of educational documentation and, above all, postcards,

thus accompanying the growth of mass tourism. This important collection thus shows a France in mutation, juxtaposing traditional farms, old industries and innovative infrastructures, against a background of accelerated urbanization. The collection was acquired by the French National Archives in 1972 and includes 300,000 phototypes, color, black and white, negatives and prints in total.

For ALEGORIA, a total of 14158 photographs and associated metadata have been digitized and processed till now.



LAPIE company, Marseille (Bouche-du-Rhône), 1955-1965, mission CT 143, n°43K-44K, Archives nationales (Paris), 1PH/C/17

Cartothèque de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme (Archives nationales)

These photographs coming from the collections of the Division des travaux topographiques (terrestrial and aerial) of the Ministries in charge of questions related to Reconstruction and Urban Planning in France. They correspond to aerial views, mainly oblique, for photogrammetric use, which were used to specify certain data such as the relief or the volume of the buildings, before the execution of topographic plans. The photographs represent views of the French towns overflowed during aerial missions and show various infrastructures (housing, factories, roads, natural landscapes, historical monuments). This collection was transferred to the French National Archives in 2013.

9551 photographs and associated metadata were digitized and processed for ALEGORIA till now. They cover the period 1948-1970 with only one mission beyond (1976); they were produced during 971 missions over the French territory.



Cartothèque de la reconstruction et de l'urbanisme, Marseille (Bouche-du-Rhône), May 3, 1952, mission 328, Archives nationales (Paris), 20130290/4

Combiér (Musée Nicéphore Niépce)

CIM (Combiér Imprimeur Maçon) was a French company created by Jean Combiér, a freelance photographer, who set up in 1922 as a postcard manufacturer. Until the war of 1939, it is the beautiful time of the postcard, which is then manufactured in phototype format. At this time, CIM covers almost all France and North Africa with a network of representatives and operators. In 1949, he decided to consider shooting by plane on a large scale. He bought a plane and trained his pilot-photographer crew. After the success of the first year, he bought two and then three airplanes and thus covered the whole of France, constituting the first national collection of airplane views without neglecting ground shots. He doubles his turnover. When J. Combiér died in 1968, the company was taken over by his wife and two children. In 1974, the CIM establishments produce 65 million postcards.

Donated to the city of Chalon-sur-Saône for its Nicéphore Niépce museum in 1975, the "Combiér collection" is made up of the photographic archives of the CIM company. The Combiér photographic archives kept at the Nicéphore Niépce museum cover the period 1949-1974.

8295 photographs and associated metadata were digitized and processed for ALEGORIA.



Le Havre, 1950 - 1975, Combiér collection, Musée Nicéphore Niépce